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CERTIFICATE

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I hereby certify that annexed is a true copy of the Provisional Specification as filed on 4 August 2003 with an application for Letters Patent number 527368 made by Dennis HILL.

Dated 6 January 2005.



Neville Harris
Commissioner of Patents, Trade Marks and Designs



527368

NEW ZEALAND
PATENTS ACT, 1953

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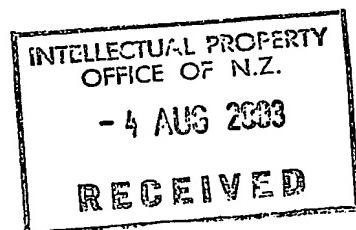
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COMPLETE SPECIFICATION

CIRCULATION AND EXTERNAL VENTING UNIT

I, DENNIS HILL, a citizen of New Zealand, of 31 Western Hutt Road, Lower Hutt, New Zealand, do hereby declare the invention for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:

- 1 -



FIELD OF INVENTION

The invention relates to ventilation and air circulation systems in equipment cabinets and in particular to thermostatically controlled air ventilation and circulation systems
5 for equipment cabinets.

BACKGROUND

Electronic equipment for many functions is housed in cabinets. Such equipment may be
10 equipment for airport runways, traffic lights, remote cellular sites, weather tracking sites and light houses. Equipment cabinets, in both central and remote locations must be maintained within a temperature range that allows the electronics inside the cabinet to function. If the temperature inside the cabinet becomes too high or too low the equipment may malfunction or cease to function altogether.

15 Some equipment is housed in cabinets in remote locations that may be hard to access and maintain. Remote locations may also be in a harsh environment that may be subject to temperature extremes. In these circumstances the equipment inside the cabinets must be protected from low temperatures as well as from high temperatures.

20 Current systems for providing ventilation for equipment cabinets may include a separate ventilation chamber attached to the cabinet. Air circulates in the ventilation chamber altering the air temperature inside the cabinet. A disadvantage of this system is that the cabinet does not experience any change in air.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

It is the object of the present invention to provide a circulation and ventilation unit that overcomes or alleviates the above disadvantages or to at least provide a useful choice.
30

In broad terms the invention comprises an air circulation and ventilation unit including a housing that fits at least partially over the ceiling of an equipment cabinet including

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

The invention will be further described by way of example only and without intending to be limiting with reference to the following drawings, wherein:

5 Figure 1 shows a cabinet with an air circulation and ventilation unit of the invention with the vent in the open position;

Figure 2 shows a cabinet with an air circulation and ventilation unit of the invention with the vent in the closed position;

10 Figure 3 shows an embodiment of the air circulation and ventilation unit of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Figure 1 shows one embodiment of air circulation and ventilation unit of the invention attached to a cabinet. Cabinet 1 has a lower vent and filter 6 and upper vents 5 and 8 (in the ceiling of the cabinet) through which air can circulate. Lower vent and filter 6 receives air through plinth vent 7. The plinth vent may form part of a separate piece that is attached to the bottom of the cabinet.

20 In general cabinet 1 will be insulated to retain some heat inside the cabinet and reduce the amount of noise that escapes from the cabinet.

Air circulation and ventilation unit 2 sits on top of cabinet 1. The air circulation and ventilation unit includes vent 4 and controller 3. Vent 4 can be rotated between an open position (shown in Figure 1) and a closed position (shown in Figure 2). Controller 3 controls the position of the vent.

As can be seen in Figure 1 vent 4 in the air circulation and ventilation unit is spaced apart from vents 5 and 8 in the ceiling of the cabinet. An external roof 9 protects the air circulation and ventilation unit and inside of the cabinet from rain, dust particles and the like while still maintaining a tamper proof cabinet and allowing ventilation. Although

Figures 1 and 2 show a cabinet with two ceiling vents, the number, size and position of the ceiling vents in the cabinet may vary.

In preferred embodiments the air circulation and ventilation unit includes at least one temperature sensor. In a preferred embodiment the temperature sensor is positioned inside the cabinet. In an alternative embodiment a temperature sensor is positioned inside the air circulation and ventilation unit. The controller 3 receives an indication of when the temperature is outside a predetermined range as sensed by the temperature sensor. If the temperature falls outside the predetermined operating range the controller 5 may operate the vent 4 to open or close the vent. For example if the internal temperature of the cabinet rises above the upper limit of the temperature range the temperature sensor sends an indication to controller 3 and the controller opens vent 4 to allow more air circulation. Likewise if the temperature within the cabinet falls below the lower limit of the temperature range the temperature sensor sends an indication to 10 controller 3 and the controller closes vent 4 to prevent fresh air from circulating within the cabinet. In one embodiment controller 3 is a solenoid, although any suitable controller may be used.

15

In one embodiment the air circulation and ventilation unit includes a fan provided in the 20 cabinet, under a vent, for example under vent 5. In an alternative embodiment the air circulation and ventilation unit may include a fan that may be positioned underneath housing unit 2. The fan may be controlled by a temperature sensor inside the cabinet to assist in air circulation.

25 If the cabinet and air circulation and ventilation unit is housed in an area that experiences very cold temperatures the air circulation and ventilation unit may include a heater to heat the inside of the cabinet if the temperature inside the cabinet falls below a predetermined lower limit. In one embodiment the heater is controlled by a temperature sensor inside the cabinet.

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As can be seen from the arrows in Figure 1 when vent 4 is open air circulates from the bottom of the cabinet and out through the top and under the openings in roof 9.

Figure 2 shows an air circulation and ventilation unit of the invention with the vent closed. When the vent is closed air circulates within the cabinet.

Controller 3 may respond to information from temperature sensor(s) and/or to an indication of the load on the components. For example if the component load is high the amount of heat generated by the components will be greater than when the component load is low so the vent may be opened during periods of high component load. In an alternative embodiment the controller may open and close the vent based on the time of day and the day of the year. This system has less flexibility to changing weather and component load conditions. Controller 3 may also respond to a condensation indication so as to reduce condensation within the cabinet. In one embodiment controller 3 is a thermostatically controlled solenoid. In an alternative embodiment controller 3 may include a microprocessor or the like and receive temperature indications from the temperature sensor(s). The controller may then open or close the vent 4 in response to temperature or other indications. In this embodiment the controller may also control any fans or heaters and these can be controlled independently of the vent.

Figure 3 is a plan view of an air circulation and ventilation unit of the invention. The air circulation and ventilation unit includes housing 2, controller 10 and vent 4. In this embodiment controller 10 is a solenoid that receives an indication from a temperature sensor (not shown) and in response opens or closes vent 4. In a preferred embodiment the temperature sensor is inside the equipment cabinet. Alternatively the temperature sensor can be housed inside the housing 2. In a further alternative embodiment a temperature sensor is housed outside the cabinet and housing to provide an indication of the outside air temperature.

As can be seen in Figure 3 vent 4 rotates about an axis (not shown) through housing 2. Attached to the axis is metal strip 12 which forms a connection between the axis and the solenoid 10 allowing the solenoid to open and close the vent by rotating the vent axis. The vent also includes micro-switch 11 that provides an indication of whether the vent 4 is open or closed. Micro-switch 11 can be remotely monitored so that the opening and

closing of vent 4 can be tracked. Micro-switch 11 can also be used to operate a fan inside the cabinet.

As an equipment protection mechanism in the event of a power failure the solenoid is
5 arranged to operate the vent to open the vent so that the equipment inside the cabinet does not over heat. In extreme cold environments the solenoid may be arranged to close the vent in the event of a power failure.

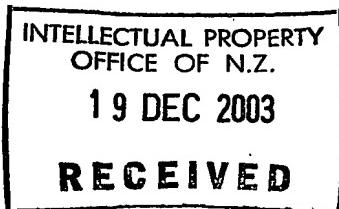
While vent 4 is shown as extending across housing 2 and being only a single vent more
10 than one vent could be provided. The position and size of vent 4 may also be altered without departing from the scope of the invention.

The foregoing describes the invention including preferred forms thereof. Alterations and modifications as will be obvious to those skilled in the art are intended to be
15 incorporated in the scope hereof as defined by the accompanying claims.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:

1. An air circulation and ventilation unit including:
 - a housing configured to fit at least partially over the ceiling of an equipment cabinet including fitting over at least one vent in the ceiling of the cabinet, so that the interior of the housing is in communication with the interior of the cabinet,
 - the housing including a housing vent moveable between an open position in which air may flow between the outside of the housing and the inside of the housing and a closed position in which little or no air can flow between the outside of the housing and the inside of the housing, and
 - a controller to control the position of the housing vent in response to a temperature indication.
2. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in claim 1 further including a temperature sensor attached to the controller that provides an indication of the temperature inside the cabinet.
3. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 further including a fan inside the housing to circulate air.
4. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 further including a fan inside the cabinet to circulate air.
5. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in claim 3 or claim 4 wherein the fan is controlled by the controller.
6. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5 further including a heater inside the housing that is controlled by the controller.
7. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6 wherein the controller includes a solenoid that controls the housing vent position.

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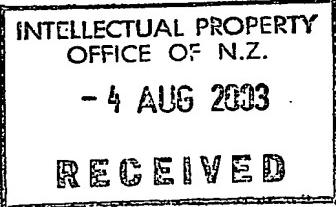


8. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7
wherein the housing vent is spaced apart from the cabinet vent.

9. An air circulation and ventilation unit as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8
5 wherein the housing vent rotates between open and closed positions.

10. An air circulation and ventilation unit substantially as herein described with
reference to the accompanying drawings.

Dennis Hill.....
By the authorised agents
A. J. PARK
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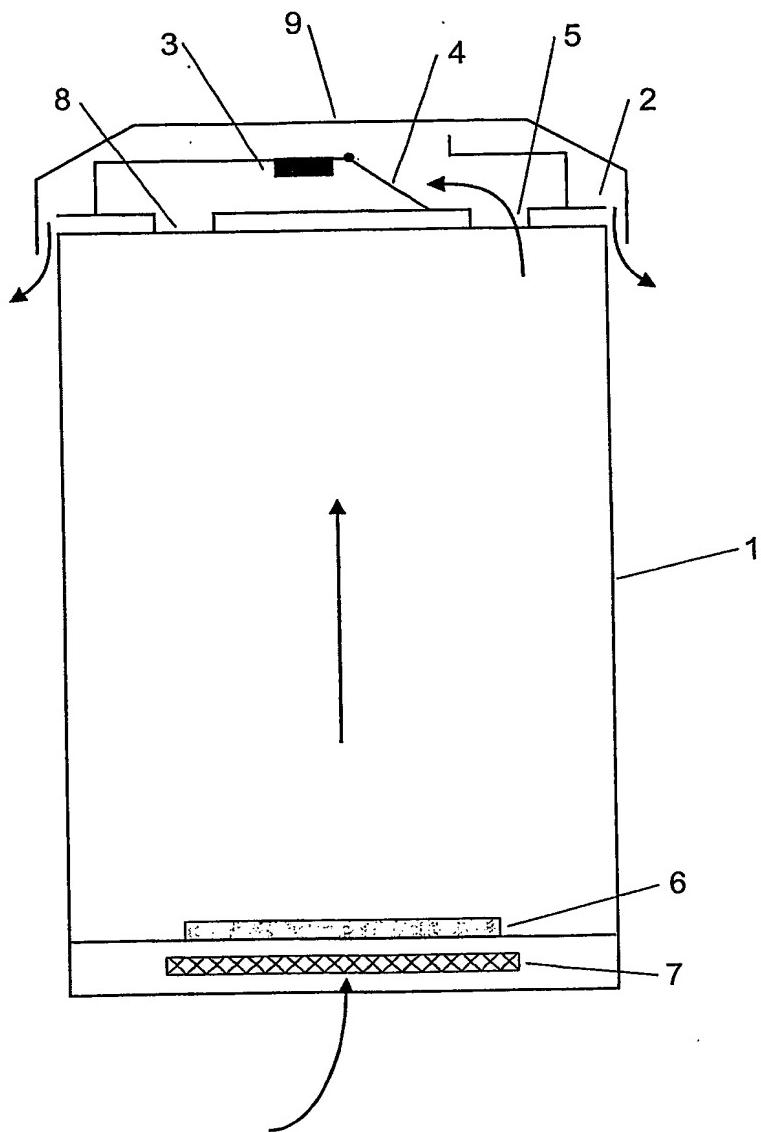


FIGURE 1

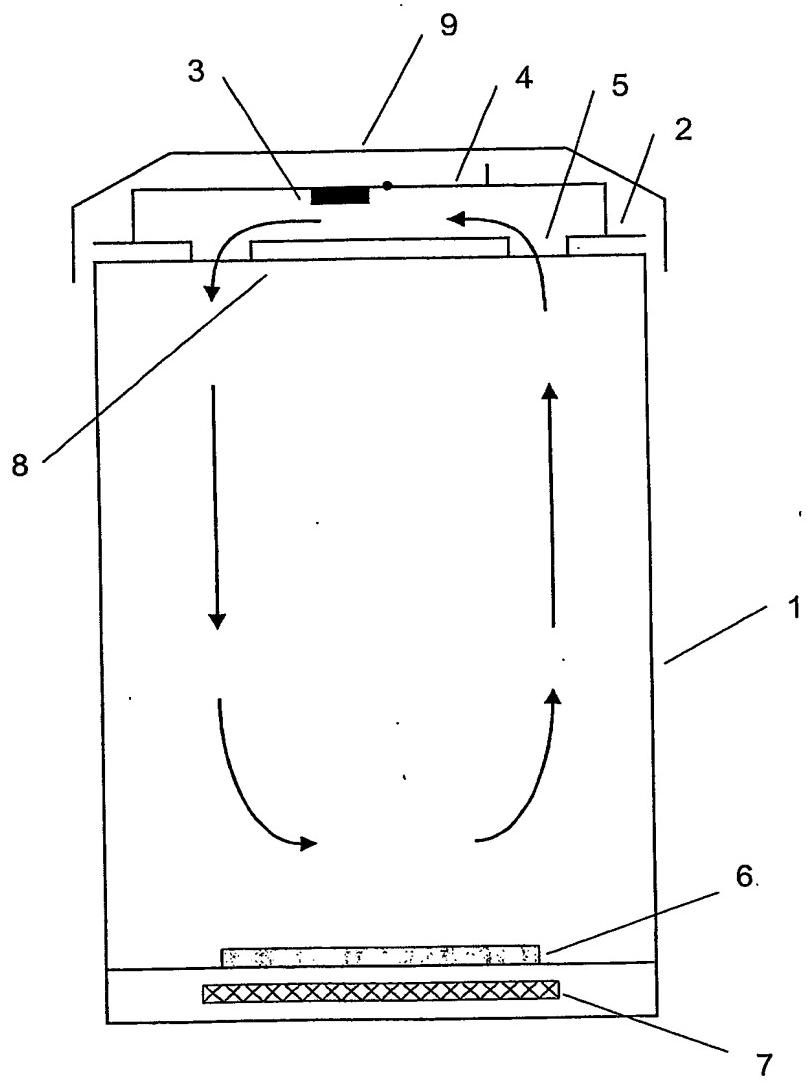


FIGURE 2

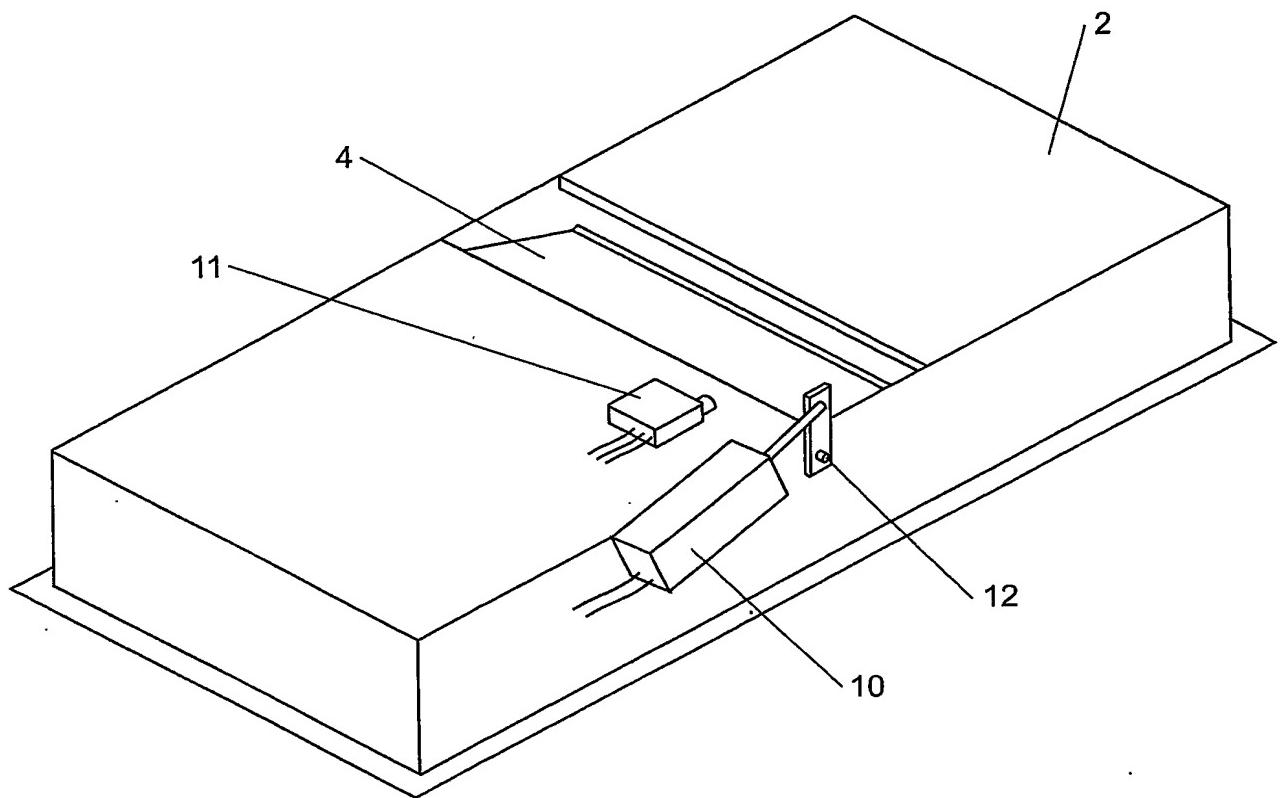


FIGURE 3

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